

# WANDSWORTH Museum

## Newsletter : Summer 2006

### Exhibitions

#### **The Big Blue: The story of Tooting Bec Lido, 1906-2006**

17 May – 16 July

When Tooting Bathing Lake opened to the public on 28 July 1906, one VIP said he hoped it would be ‘a benefit to the public for a long time to come.’ A hundred years later, and thousands of people still flock to Tooting Bec Lido (as it became known in the 1930s) every summer. One of its original purposes was to be a communal bath for the newly arrived residents of the Totterdown Estate. But within a few weeks of the opening, a group of swimmers had got together to form the South London Swimming Club. The club still holds its Sunday morning races at the lido and has played a major part in the long-term survival of this council-owned amenity. *The Big Blue* exhibition marks the centenaries of both the lido and the South London Swimming Club and will include photographs, paintings and period swimwear from the last 100 years.

To accompany the exhibition, there will be two talks by Janet Smith, author of *Liquid Assets - the lidos and open air swimming pools of Britain*. See the Events section for details.

#### **Animal Magic**

26 July – 24 September

Dairy farming and pig breeding, pigeon shooting and greyhound racing, polo ponies and trace horses, zebras and penguins, stray dogs and cats and a talking raven called “Gyp”. This exhibition is about animals and the roles they have played in local life, ranging from the everyday dependence on animals for food and transport, to their use in sport, to concern for animal welfare. The exhibition will include material on local institutions such as the Battersea Dogs & Cats Home, the Anti-Vivisection Hospital and Battersea Park Zoo as well as a competition to find the person who looks most like their pet.



A horse-drawn cart on the Surrey Iron Railway, circa 1830.

We are hoping to organize some special events to accompany the exhibition. Details will be available nearer the time.

## Events: Talks

### Writers and poets of Wandsworth

Learn about the lives of some of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century authors who were associated with our local area. A talk for Adult Learners Week and the London Lives promotion by Sue Barber, Assistant Curator.

**Saturday 20 May at 3pm, Free**

Free but please book in advance on 020 8871 7074 or email [museuminfo@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:museuminfo@wandsworth.gov.uk)

### The Big Blue: The story of Tooting Bec Lido, 1906-2006

A talk by Janet Smith about the Lido and the South London Swimming Club.

**Thursday 8 June at 7.30pm** (doors open at 7.00pm), **tickets £2.50**

### Liquid Assets : How the lido brought the Mediterranean to Britain

This talk by Janet Smith will focus on the 1930s, the heyday of the lido and the era of Art Deco architecture.

**Saturday 8 July at 3.00pm, tickets £2.50**

To book phone 020 8871 7074 or email [museuminfo@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:museuminfo@wandsworth.gov.uk)

## It's our Birthday!



In 2006, it will be 20 years since Wandsworth Museum Service was founded and 10 years since the Museum moved from its original home in Putney Library to the

Courthouse building in Wandsworth. We will be celebrating our double anniversary on Saturday 17 June with a day of special activities. This is your chance to see our birthday suits!

We will be demonstrating some of the replica historical costume that we use to teach school groups, by dressing a Roman soldier, a Stuart gentleman and a Victorian maid. While the costume is designed for use with children, the demonstrations will also appeal to adults as we will look at the different elements of each costume and its historical context. We are also

hoping to demonstrate how to put on a sari and an African headwrap or outfit.

The Museum will be open from 10am to 5pm on Saturday 17 June, with demonstrations every hour from 11am. We are in the early stages of planning this event and fuller details will be available nearer the time. But we can safely say that birthday cake will be a feature of the day!

## Calling all pet owners

Are you ravishing like your rabbit? As gorgeous as your guinea pig? Could you be mistaken for your moggy? Or are you just a handsome hound?

As part of our *Animal Magic* exhibition, we will be holding a competition to find the person who looks most like their pet. Entries will be displayed in the exhibition and we will be asking visitors to vote for the winner. Prizes will be awarded to the winning couple (pet and owner) after the end of the exhibition.



If you would like to enter, please send a photograph of yourself and your pet to Wandsworth Museum, The Courthouse, 11 Garratt Lane, London SW18 4AQ or email to [museumcollections@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:museumcollections@wandsworth.gov.uk). Please include your name, address and phone number and your age if you are under 16 (we welcome entries from adults and children alike). Please also tell us your pet's name. Entries must be received by Monday 10 July.

## Summer Fun

This August, the Museum courtyard will once again be transformed into an activity area for our youngest visitors. Under 6s will be able to enjoy informal activities on the theme of animals (tying in with our *Animal Magic* exhibition). These will complement the workshops held in the Education Room and provide those children

who are unable to attend a workshop (demand for places is always high) with an alternative.

## Then and Now

A new addition to our *Story of Wandsworth* gallery is a "Then and Now" exhibit which can be found in the Wandsworth Today section. Every couple of months we will display a different watercolour or photograph from the Museum collection with a photograph showing the same view as it appears now. The first pair of pictures on display show Church Road, Battersea, in 1887 and today.

## Shaftesbury Voices

During August, a small touring display from the Peabody Trust will be on show in our Wandsworth Villages Gallery. *Shaftesbury Voices* features reminiscences by residents of the Shaftesbury Park Estate in Battersea.

## Collecting memories - can you help?

Do you have spare time to help us record Wandsworth's history? We are seeking more people to help with the Museum's Oral History project. If you have an interest in people and local history this work is very rewarding and contributes towards a unique archive of local memories. We provide support, equipment and training if **you** have the **time**. Please contact Heather Maddin on 020 8871 7075.

## New to the Collection

Nick Connolly has donated a collection of millinery items that once belonged to his aunt, Lilian Connolly who was born in Battersea in 1910. Miss Connolly trained as a milliner's assistant in the late 1920s. The objects include a wooden hat stand, on which the hats were made, a curved-based iron and trivet, tins containing a range of chemicals used in millinery, and a selection of partially made hats. Also donated were letters relating to Miss Connolly's millinery training and initial apprenticeships with millinery firms.

Mr S. Patel has donated a bunk bed and a chemical toilet, dating from 1939-1945. Both items were found in the cellar of a shop situated

in Lower Richmond Road, which had served as a street air raid shelter during World War II.

Mr Owen Streets has donated the Red Cross uniforms that belonged to his wife, Grace. These consist of the summer uniform (a grey dress) and the formal uniform (a navy jacket and skirt). Mrs Streets worked for the Red Cross for 50 years, starting as a volunteer in 1938. During the War she became part of the Civil Defence Corps as a full-time Voluntary Aid Detachment in the Red Cross. At this time she was based in Kensington but after the War, when she continued to serve as a volunteer, she was based in Fairfield Street, Wandsworth, and then in Vardens Road, Battersea. Mrs Streets was awarded the Defence Medal and the Red Cross Long Service Medal and she wore the ribbons of both of these on her uniforms.

Klaus Marx has donated a large leather bound scrapbook documenting Mr E.P. Olney's Christian Youth Work for various organisations in the Borough of Wandsworth from around 1900 until his death in 1967. Following Mr Olney's death the scrapbook refers to Mr Marx's own work for Christian organisations in the borough up until 1982. The album particularly features the Putney Crusaders, but also includes the Telegraph Messengers Christian Association and the South London Crusader Classes.



Image taken from a New Year's card issued by the Crusaders' Bible Class, Battersea, 1917

Dr Paul Hetherington of Putney has donated his National Service battledress. Dr Hetherington served as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant with the Royal Signals between September 1954 and September 1956. The uniform is complete from the helmet down

to the boots, except for the original khaki shirt, which has not survived.

## Education Service News

Education Service activities for children and families have ranged widely this spring, from making robots to working with fabric and stitchery, with a Tudor day thrown in for good measure. For the spring half term we provided cardboard boxes and a variety of recycled junk, and the children providing the creativity, to produce wonderful, imaginative robots. The children also displayed their creativity in thinking up the tasks they wanted their robots to perform. The 5s and under crowd created control panels from cardboard carton tops, again with a good deal of creative thought going into just what – or who – was going to be controlled.

On Saturday 18 March, over 350 visitors were delighted to step into our reconstructed Tudor marketplace and take part in the activities on offer. Re-enactors from *The Guild of Costumed Interpreters* were informative and engaging as they demonstrated and taught calligraphy, spinning, toys and games, potion making, and other typical activities of the Tudor era. On the following Saturday, visitors were able to participate in a completely different activity, this time run by a member of the Embroiderers' Guild. In conjunction with the temporary exhibition, *The Visible Stitch*, participants of all ages were invited to create a bug, butterfly or beetle to add to a large banner. A variety of bright, shiny, sparkly materials were available to use and 70 beautiful bugs were created to decorate the lively, colourful banner that now graces the Education Room. Tutors from the Young Embroiderers' Guild inspired children during the Easter holiday break with fun activities. Children aged 5 and under created fabulous woven collages whilst the older set used thread, beads, felt, and fabric to create unique and wonderful notebook covers.

Coming up, we are looking forward to partnering with West Hill Library for summer half term activities themed around National Share a Story Month. There will be stories, hats to make and take home, as well as a chance to contribute to a mural that will hang in West Hill Library. At the end of the half term week the children can wear their hats to the Library, view the murals they have made, and listen to story time.

## Museum Shop

We are very pleased to have two new books on our bookshelves:

*The Wandle Guide*, produced by The Wandle Group, is an excellent new revision of *The River Wandle: A Guide and Handbook*. Its clear and concise writing, with many illustrations, is a must for those with an interest in the River Wandle. Price £4.95. The book is also a good accompaniment to *The Wandle Trail Guide*, a 12 mile route that follows the river as closely as possible. Price £2.00

*Indoor Relief*, by Opal Gibson, is a fascinating and very informative book on Swaffield Road Workhouse, which was built in 1866 at a cost of £100,000. The book has been written chronologically and shows the transition from Workhouse to Institution to Residential Home. For the the aged and those who did not have a surviving relative, "*Indoor Relief*" really did become "home". Price £13.50. Some of you may remember the article featuring "*Indoor Relief*" in the Surrey Comet back in May 2005.



We continue to supply many greeting cards (our shop has become well known for supplying cards with a difference!) books, stationery and much much more! We look forward to seeing you.

Wandsworth Museum, The Courthouse,  
11 Garratt Lane, SW18 4AQ  
Tel: 020 8871 7074

E-mail: [wandsworthmuseum@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:wandsworthmuseum@wandsworth.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/museum](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/museum)

Open: Tuesday – Friday, 10-5 and Saturday-Sunday, 2-5

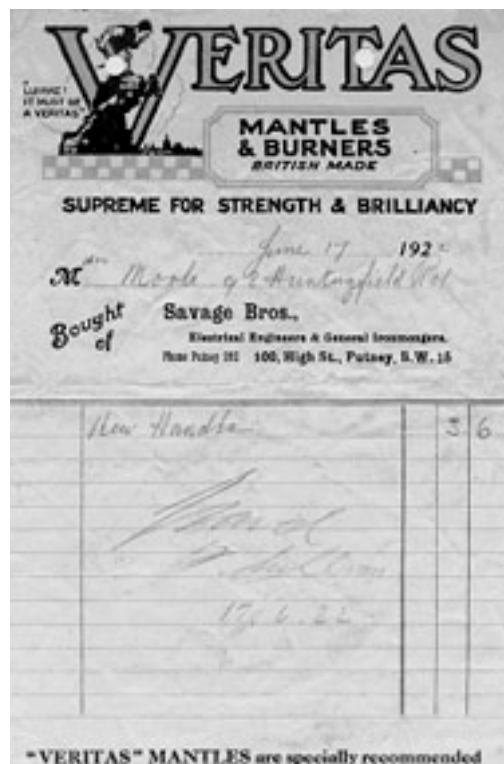
Admission FREE

# Local History Service News

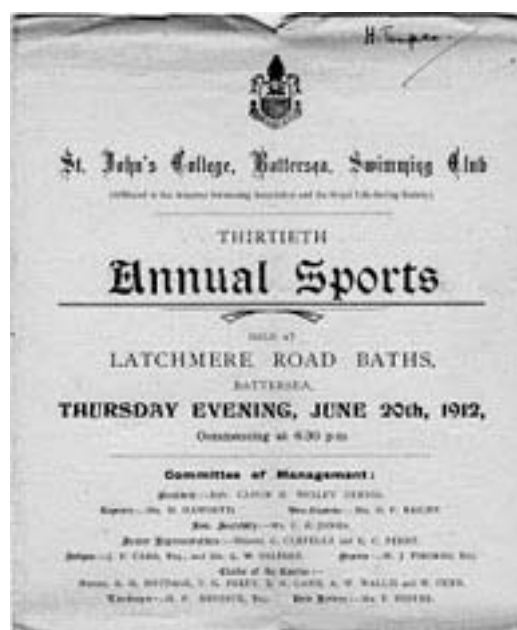
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## Archive collections news

Photographs of the Veritas Incandescent Mantle Works, records and papers including a history of mantle manufacturing and plans of lighting designs by Henry George Morgan, Manager at Veritas, have been recently donated. Based in Garratt Lane, this firm, which closed in 1972, was the last firm producing gas mantles in Wandsworth. The records include an inventory of the contents of the various departments of the Veritas Gas Mantle works when Henry Morgan took it over on 14 March 1919 and an album of photographs covering the years 1919-1925 showing views of the building, photographs of staff and factory workers.



We have recently added to the archives an album relating to St. John's College Battersea Old Boys, compiled by Harry Temple, a student at St. John's College for teacher training 1910-1912. It contains many details of former students including photographs with names and addresses. There are team photographs for soccer, 'rugger', 'fives', athletics and other societies, as well as pictures of parts of the college itself. Programmes for various events have been pasted in such as Intercollege Sports 1911, the Swimming Club annual sports at Latchmere Road Baths, and a Christmas entertainment programme for December 9th 1911.



There are also various postcards of the Crowborough Territorial Camp 1911. The album nicely complements material already held by WLHS including photographs and a run of the Battersea Club year books; some of these items have recently been on display in our reading room.

Wandsworth Parks Service have passed on to us a large group of records (fifteen boxes) relating to property transactions of the Battersea Park Commissioners c1847-1899. These include deeds relating to local pubs and businesses, including Price's Candle Factory and The Prince Albert Pub and some leases relating to the Albert Palace Exhibition. In addition, they have also passed on registers of Battersea Park employees 1939-1948 that contain details of the way that the war impacted the park and people working there.

### **Additional local history resources**

We have acquired 3 new volumes of the Kelly's London Post Office Directories covering 1942, 1944 and 1947, to add to our run beginning 1884. They are a good source for family, business and local history.

Guess the businesses from the 1944 directory whose telegraphic addresses are listed here:  
"Wandgasko, Put"; "Belmont, Phone";  
"Profectus, Claproad"; "Anaclastic, Phone";  
"Kaelgee, Phone".

Some are easier than others. The businesses are: Wandsworth and District Gas Company; Price's Candles; Projectile & Engineering Company of Acre Street; Aluminium Plant and Vessel Company of Point Pleasant; K.L.G. Sparking Plugs of Putney Vale.



We are grateful to the Wandsworth Historical Society for providing copied extracts of directories: 1790-1845. We have had these bound and this volume is now available for use. Wandsworth Historical Society have also kindly donated a colour copy of a 1729 plan of the manor of Tooting Bec (with the permission of the London Metropolitan Archives who hold the original).

### **Online sources**

Online sources are increasingly useful for helping with enquiries. The redesigned Historical Directories site has come in handy, despite still being a little awkward to search. It has directories up to 1919:-

<http://www.historicaldirectories.org/hd/index.asp>

The European Visual Archive site is worth a look for local photographs. We have recently found images of the Nine Elms area (including the Ponton Road Place of Detention) and some of York Road near Wandsworth Town Station:-  
<http://192.87.107.12/eva/uk/search.asp>

A friend has recently drawn attention to a good online collection, from Mapco, of old London maps:-

<http://archivemaps.com/mapco/london.htm>

Don't forget that you can book our internet PC, available for use for local and family history research, for up to an hour per day free of charge.

## **Family History events for Adult Learners' Week**

### **Focus on Family History**

We are repeating our successful event first held in February, offering an opportunity for those who missed it to drop in for a chat and find out what family history sources Wandsworth Local History Service can offer. Beginners are especially welcome. Come along for advice; a display of family history sources and publications; informal demonstrations of family history websites and free prize draw!

**Saturday 20 May 2006 2pm-4pm**

Free, no need to book.

### **Free taster sessions exploring family history websites**

One-to one sessions of 40 minutes; available between 10am-5pm on Tuesday 23 May, Wednesday 24 May, and Friday 26 May at Wandsworth Local History Service. Free but must be booked in advance. For information or to book telephone 020 8871 7753.

**Wandsworth Local History Service, Battersea Library,  
Lavender Hill, SW11 1JB**

**Tel: 020 8871 7753 Fax: 020 7978 4376 Email:  
[localhistory@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:localhistory@wandsworth.gov.uk)**

**Monday closed, Tuesday - Wednesday 10am - 8pm,  
Thursday closed, Friday 10am - 5pm,  
Saturday 9am - 1pm, Sunday closed**